United Nations

Press Release

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- United Nations expert team reports "considerable progress" in discussions with Iraqi authorities on possible Iraqi involvement in chemical weapons destruction programme.

- Secretary-General to go to Geneva to attend preparations for United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to chair United Nations inter-agency meeting, and to meet with POLISARIO representatives.

- United Nations Children's Fund appeals for $1 million for emergency assistance to Albania to alleviate "extremely serious situation" due to malnutrition.

- World's nations to meet at 1994 population conference to focus on relationship between population and sustained development.

- Anti-racism Committee concludes that Government of Israel has not implemented International Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination or Geneva Convention in occupied territories.

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The Special Commission set up by the Security Council's resolution 687 (1991) to oversee the disarmament of Iraq has made considerable progress in efforts to involve Iraq in all aspects of the chemical weapons destruction programme. A team of experts from the Special Commission visited Iraq from 11 to 14 August to discuss the possible option of direct Iraqi participation.

Head of the mission, Mr. J. Molander from the Special Commission, said in a statement that discussions were carried out in a positive atmosphere which undoubtedly contributed to the progress made and the understanding achieved.

The subjects discussed by the mission and the Iraqi authorities included the interlinked topics of collection and transport of the chemical weapons,

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defusing and rendering munitions explosively harmless and checking that munitions were defused and explosively inert.

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A United Nations spokesman announced today that Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar is scheduled to go to Geneva on Monday, 26 August, where he will attend the third plenary session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

During the afternoon, he would chair an inter-agency meeting on ways of improving the emergency response capacity of the United Nations system. On Tuesday, Mr. Pérez de Cuellar was expected to meet with representatives of Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) regarding developments in Western Sahara. He is scheduled to return to New York on Wednesday, 27 August.

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The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today launched an appeal for $1 million to provide emergency assistance to Albania for the next six months to alleviate what it described as "an extremely serious situation".

The Agency said in a press release that the provision of food and medical supplies was needed urgently to alleviate the plight of children and women as the Balkan nation was struggling with a severe economic crisis after nearly 50 years of isolation.

Jim Mohan, head of a UNICEF mission that left Tirana yesterday after a week of field visits and consultations with the Government described hospitals with "badly malnourished children, some in an acute state".

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The proposal to convene an International Conference on Population and Development was approved by the Economic and Social Council during its recently concluded summer session in Geneva. The Conference is scheduled for 1994 at a site to be determined.

According to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Dr. Nafis Sadik, the international gathering will address essentially topics such as population growth; policies and programmes; population environment and development; migration and urbanization; women and population dynamics; and family planning and family health.

World population, approximately 5.4 billion today, is expected to reach 6.2 billion by the year 2000, with more than 90 per cent of the increase taking place in the developing world. Many analysts now believe that world population will reach 10 billion by the year 2050 and could continue to grow for another century unless substantial progress is made to reduce fertility.

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The first Intergovernmental Population Conference was held in Bucharest in 1974 followed in 1984 by a conference in Mexico City.

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The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reiterated yesterday in Geneva that the Government of Israel had not implemented the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination or the Geneva Convention in the occupied Arab territories.

The Committee took that decision after concluding its review of Israel's sixth periodic report outlining its efforts to combat racial discrimination.

The 18-member expert body also expressed great concern over the situation in the occupied Arab territories, and stated its regret that Israel's report on the implementation of the anti-discrimination Convention had not been prepared in accordance with its guidelines.

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